

CHAPTER VI

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF OUR PROPOSAL

The recommendations contained in this report should not be looked upon as a general panacea to the public's concern that paid lobbyists and friends of the government, regardless of the political party in power, are secretly receiving preferential treatment. These recommendations when implemented will provide for more information to be made available to the public. This should result in a more informed public and democracy should benefit as public disclosure is central to the operation of democratic government. A public record is created which will be open for all to scrutinize.

In making these recommendations we have addressed ourselves to the "guiding principles" which are set forth in the government's discussion paper. We believe the system we have recommended creates an open system of disclosure, clearly establishes the criteria for those who are to register, and should be fairly simple to deal with from an administrative perspective. In making these recommendations we have had to deal with two competing principles. We did not want to interfere with the public's access to government while at the same time we wished to have disclosure of activities from the lobbying sector. We feel we have achieved a balance between these two principles in our requirements for registration and disclosure. During our discussions concerning information which should be required from lobbyists, it was suggested that both lobbyists and those who are the object of lobbying activities - particularly public servants and Cabinet Ministers - be required to keep a list of contacts and the subject-matter of those contacts. There is great concern among Members of Parliament with regard to the origin of some pieces of legislation and subsequent amendments, as Members are provided with little information on the forces which brought the legislative